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BOOK REVIEWS

THE POEMS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE. Edited by Killis Campbell. Boston : Ginn and Company.

The keen competition in the publishing circles of to-day has brought forth some distressing symptoms. It has given us books edited by men who have nothing to say, but whose professional positions will enable even mediocre work to sell. It has led to the voluminous elaboration of the obvious, so that the book or the series might be advertised as the most "fully" edited work or series on the market; and all too frequently the student in search of light upon an author gets lost in the trackless jungle of useless editorial information. Then we have always with us the irritating soul who, through some honest defect of his mental machinery or else through calm calculation that any sort of advertising pays, is perennially being permitted to blazen to an astonished world some antiquated discovery, some specious theory, or some revolutionary doctrine whose orbit remains within his own skull.

One finishes reading Professor Campbell's edition of the Poems of Poe, then, with a highly pleasurable sense of relief that none of his worst fears have been realized. In the first place, far from the last word had been said on Poe: he needed to be edited; and Professor Campbell has brought to the work information larger in mass than anyone who has yet undertaken the task; and, better still, perhaps, all his minute and varied information is handled with a finely poised sanity.

Monomania can easily be developed over the motley tragedy of the personal life of Poe, so deeply buried under a shifting mass of conflicting rumors, echoes of rumors, and downright lies. When one attempts to track the devious windings of that morbid mind across the dim borders of the no-man's world in which its real home lay, one may well return with less balance than if the quest had been the innermost dwelling-place of a Trollope or even of a Macaulay. Poe, however, in Professor Campbell's admirably sifted introduction is neither mythic demigod nor devil, but a real human being, like the rest of us,

however possessed by genius or warped by adverse winds. The King can do wrong (p. xxvi), yet he too has his good qualities. It is not the intention here to intimate that the editor tamely sits on the fence. Independence of judgment he has (p. xx), and much new information (e.g. p. xiv) upon which to base that judgment.

Under the heading of "The Canon of Poe's Poems" the editor brings to bear long years of special research. More than any other man known to the writer is he entitled to speak with authority on this point; so that one may feel that regardless of what may appear in other editions of Poe's poems extant before this one, here is the total body of Poe's really authenticated poetry. Nor does it seem probable that material additions will be made in the near future, if any at all. For years too many keen intellects have employed themselves with indefatigable industry to the research, and the probable sources have been too well mapped out.

Had a happier fate been Poe's, he might have been as fastidious about publication as any Gray; and the result of many of the innumerable changes in the text of his poems which he made might never have reached us. As it is, through Professor Campbell's variorum text, we are enabled, with a fullness and accuracy such as we can achieve in the case of no other American poet, and with only one or two British ones, to trace the growth of a poetic mind and to watch the workings of a great critical faculty. The lovers of poetry owe the editor an especial debt for this feature of his edition. Moreover, instead of being exiled to the limbo of the notes or of an appendix, the variations are where they should be, at the foot of the page below the approved (the latest) text.

The only dissatisfaction that one feels with Professor Campbell's edition comes where, in the preface and in the notes, he deals with the indebtedness of Poe to other poets or, occasionally, in the notes, refers to similarities between Poe and the writings of his successors. Some of these he could have spared. One of the most industrious, and not the least intelligent, graduate students that the writer ever knew once undertook to write a doctor's thesis on "The Reading of Poe." Long ago a doctoral dis-

sertation in a fairly bulky volume, as such things go, appeared by this student—but not on Poe, though the Poe project occupied him, I believe, for many months. Up to date, so far as I know, the reading of Poe has not even reached the dignity of an article. True there is a broad difference between a graduate student, however brilliant, and a mature scholar like Professor Campbell: to establish the reading of anyone, one must have time to do some reading for one's self. The trouble is that he has found not too little but too much. Poe's originality as a whole no one has questioned. Some of Professor Campbell's parallels and sources fail to carry conviction in spite of Poe's reputation as a borrower. How easy it is to note "influences" or parallel passages of fact, choice of word or of atmosphere, may be brought out by the following references which have not been recorded by the editor. The first four lines of "Fairy-Land" suggest parts of Collins's "Ode to Evening." Compare "The City of the Sea" and "Savannah-la-Mar":—

	Upon some far-off happier sea
and	For old, uphappy, far-off things ;
	There is a two-fold <i>Silence</i>
and	When two-fold silence was the song of love.

Compare the beginning

	Of all who hail thy presence as the morning
with the beginning of	
	Among the thousands who will hail and cheer ;
and	Flow softly, gently, vital stream
with	Flow gently, sweet Afton.

The writer by no means asserts that any of these passages or works had any influence upon each other. They merely strike him as being quite as close one to another as many of the passages cited by Professor Campbell, though, beyond doubt, most of the citations which he makes are quite to the point. One other which he might have made and which does seem to be worth while is the similarity between "For Annie" and "The Bridge of Sighs."

Not the least valuable part of this edition lies in the 157 closely packed pages of notes, wherein the editor has given us the fruits of his long years of ardent study of Poe. The date of composition, the text, the source, and in some cases the critical estimate are followed by the usual specific comment upon lines.

Like all things human, Professor Campbell's *Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* is not perfect. In one or two minor matters of collation, it differs from its nearest rival, the Whitty edition, (though which is correct the writer cannot say); and the one typographical error (*down* for *dawn*, p. 104) which the reviewer has noted has chosen a highly conspicuous place in which to advertise itself. But nevertheless it seems safe to say that this work will remain for a long time to come the indispensable edition of the poems of Poe.

EARL L. BRADSHER.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE. Revised and Definitive Edition. Edited by J. H. Whitty. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1917. \$2.25 net.

The first edition of this book, "the fruit of researches extending over a period of thirty years," appeared in 1911. This second edition, which appeared almost simultaneously with Campbell's, contains, as announced in the Preface, new Poe discoveries in the shape of five additional poems and certain other poems attributed to Poe on very doubtful grounds. The Appendix includes some interesting material relating to Poe's brief sojourn in Scotland, with illustrations of the house where he stayed and the school which he is supposed to have attended.

HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR, 1861-1865. By James Ford Rhodes, LL.D., D.Litt. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1917. \$2.50.

Any book by Dr. Rhodes is sure to be a distinct contribution to our knowledge of the subject treated, and this one is no exception to the rule. While he goes over the same ground which is so thoroughly covered by Volumes 3, 4, and 5 of his *History of the United States, 1850-1877*, it is in no sense an abridgment of them. In some instances, Dr. Rhodes has quoted verbatim from his larger work; but it is only when there has seemed to be